

10 Ways to Incorporate Self Care



“Care for yourself so you can care for others” – an adage that many professionals and kinship caregivers aim to live by. Self-care is necessary for mental and emotional well-being when faced with the daily stressors that may arise in kinship care. Reserve time for yourself, whether five minutes, an hour, any amount of time, to preserve your mental, emotional, and physical well-being.



1. Expressions of gratitude. Journaling can help you gain control of your emotions, and studies have shown that noting what makes you grateful each day can improve your mental health.



3. Connect with nature. Direct access to nature can increase resilience, protects against stress, and improves concentration.



2. Exercise. Reduce anxiety, depression, and a negative mood by exercising. Getting moving, doing strength exercises, yoga, and/or stretching improves self-esteem and cognitive function.



4. Meditate. Meditation has a quieting effect on the mind and can reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and pain. It increases the feeling of well-being.





5. Laugh. The benefits of laughter is no joke. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, which increases endorphins that are release by your brain, making you feel better. Laughter sooths tension, improves your immune system, and improves your mood.



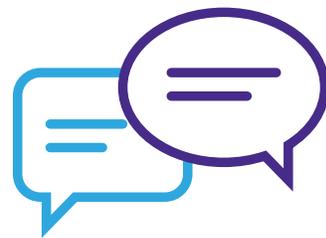
7. Create a priorities list. Create a list of priorities for home, work, and family. Decide which ones are a daily-must, and postpone activities that create more stress than peace.



9. Find inspiration and savor. Feeling inspired improves our energy level and our mood. Make time to focus on your personal sources of inspiration. This can be activities such as knitting, being with a pet, learning about antique cars, or you can create a “savoring journal” by saving inspirational sources or creating Pinterest boards.



6. Practice saying “no.” You may be asked to volunteer for activities that your child is involved in. It’s nice to participate, but be aware of too many activities in case it depletes your energy. Practice saying, “No, thank you for asking” when you have reached your limit.



8. Find support. Talking about your problems without censoring details can be liberating. Vent to someone you trust, and/or consult with a professional.



10. Schedule free time. We schedule meetings and appointments, and it’s time to schedule time for yourself to do something fun and relaxing. You deserve it.

